

Amendments to the Claims

1-18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) A method of injecting a ~~defined volume of~~ sample plug into an electrolyte channel in a microfluidics device, comprising the steps of:

placing a sample having a composition of sample components in a sample channel that intersects the electrolyte channel at a supply port,

injecting the sample ~~infrom~~ the sample channel along a pathway by applying an electric field across the sample channel and a drain channel to form the sample plug in the electrolyte channel, the pathway comprising that includes the supply port, a drain port intersecting the electrolyte channel at a location axially spaced from the ~~first~~supply port, and a segment of the electrolyte channel between the two ports, the sample plug having said composition of sample components~~where the sample volume is defined as the region of the electrolyte channel extending between and along the two ports, by applying an electric field across the supply and drain channels,~~

~~by said injecting, producing a defined sample volume in the electrolyte channel, and~~

electrokinetically moving the ~~defined~~ sample plug volume along the electrolyte channel by applying an electric field across a reservoir for ~~the~~an electrolyte buffer and a drain at an opposite end of the electrolyte channel.

20. (currently amended) The method of claim 19, wherein, during said moving, subjecting said supply and drain channels to an electric potential which is different from the electric potential at the reservoir for the electrolyte buffer, thus establishing a potential difference such that the electrolyte buffer is allowed to advance into said ~~supply~~sample channel and into said drain channel.

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said potential difference is chosen such that a resultant electric field strength amounts to at least about 0.1 V/cm.